



C3.1

Core Unit
Pathway 1

What is religion?

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About this unit:

This unit seeks to introduce the idea of religion and worldviews, considering the fluid and changing nature of belief and practice. It shows there are many expressions of worldviews which may include a mix of institutional worldviews and personal worldviews, as well as religious and non-religious worldviews. Students will commence using the language of lenses and will build their reflective capabilities when considering their position and how it came to be formed.

Age-Related Pathway Statement:

Good RE students understand that religion is a worldwide phenomenon. They explain why in some ways each religion/worldview is quite different while in other ways there are close connections between some of them. They understand that religions/worldviews are made up of smaller groups that are alike in some ways and very different in others.

The religions studied in this unit:

Christianity, Buddhism, Paganism, Humanism, Atheism. Additional religions can be added to suit discussions.

Estimated teaching time for this unit:

6 – 8 hours

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Vocabulary	Resources
<p>In this unit, students will have opportunities to use words and phrases related to:</p> <p>Worldviews Personal worldviews Institutional worldviews Atheism Humanism Agnosticism Antitheism Lenses</p>	<p>Nobody Stands Nowhere (Theos Thinktank) https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=AFRxFK-Jdos</p> <p>What's Your Worldview (Impact 360 Institute) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXnSE0uvwzM</p> <p>Spirited Arts Competition https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/</p> <p>Interactive National Census https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/change/identity/religion/religion-tb/no-religion?lad=E08000035</p> <p>Dawkins' Worldview https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3BdFRigKeg</p> <p>Gallup International https://www.gallup-international.bg/en/36009/religion-prevails-in-the-world/</p> <p>Pew Research https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2023/08/30/non-religion/</p>

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EXPECTATIONS – informed by ongoing assessment throughout the unit:

Students working towards the age-related expectations will:

- Know that there are religious and non-religious worldviews that impact on the way we live our lives.
- Know that expressions may vary globally.
- Know that worldviews can provide meaning for a person's life.

Students working at the age-related expectations are able to:

- Understand that religion is a worldwide phenomenon comprising a range of expressions and textures. They can provide examples of similarities and differences within religious and non-religious groups and between them. They are aware that beliefs and worldviews are not simply monolithic, but fluid and subject to change.

In order to broaden and deepen their learning, some students might:

- Demonstrate a stronger disciplinary approach to learning about a wider range of worldviews independently.



ASSESSMENT SUGGESTIONS

- 'Lenses' artwork could be assessed with teacher-selected criteria. Students could produce a supporting paragraph to explain the imagery they produced on the lenses template (see lesson 1, last activity).
- Research panel homework could be assessed against teacher-selected criteria.
- Student oral responses could be recorded and assessed (see last lesson 'washing line' activity).
- Diagnostic marking sheets could be produced and added to teacher folders throughout the unit.
- An additional lesson with a written assessment such as an essay question could be included.

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Key Questions	Learning Objectives Students should:	Teaching and Learning Opportunities	Wider Learning Opportunities / Points to Note
<p>What is meant by religion and worldviews?</p>	<p>Be able to explain what is meant by worldviews.</p> <p>Be able to reflect on their own personal worldview.</p>	<p>Students should discuss what they think might be meant by the term religion and worldviews. The teacher may provide a selection of images to stimulate discussion.</p> <p>Watch <i>Nobody Stands Nowhere</i> (Theos Thinktank) https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=AFRxKF-Jdos . After watching it, they should then write down their more informed understanding of what is meant by worldviews.</p> <p>Students may then be given a dartboard activity. They would need post-it notes or printed cards with factors (lenses) that could affect a person’s worldview. As a group, they should move the ones with a higher impact to the centre, and the ones with a lower impact to the edge. They could then use spare post-it notes to add their own factors. Students should then select a representative to share their decision-making process with the class.</p> <p>The class could then watch <i>What’s Your Worldview</i> (Impact 360 Institute) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXnSE0uvwzM They may then produce a short paragraph explaining what their worldview is and why they think it has been formed this way. Alternatively, the teacher could give them a printout of a pair of glasses. They could draw images that represent their worldview in the lenses.</p>	<p>Students could be guided to create a piece of artwork that represents the idea we all see the world through a range of lenses. This could be a piece of homework, an extension lesson or it could be done over the unit. The final product could be entered into the annual <i>Spirited Arts Competition</i> https://www.natre.org.uk/about-natre/projects/spirited-arts/</p>

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<p>Why is there diversity within belief?</p>	<p>Be able to explain the fluid nature of a worldview.</p> <p>Be able to distinguish between institutional and personal worldviews.</p> <p>Be able to explain how location and geography may impact a worldview.</p>	<p>Students could be provided with cards with statements representing a range of worldviews. There should be several statements that come from the same religion or worldview, but that differ (this will be to demonstrate that even within a religion, the individual worldview might change). Students should sort these into the respective religions/non-religious worldviews (EG. Christianity, Humanism, Sikhi, Paganism). The teacher should then receive feedback on why students decided to group them in the way they had.</p> <p>The teacher then explains the idea of an institutional worldview (such as that of the Catholic Church and differing denominational worldviews), and personal worldviews. An example of this could be the Catholic Church teaching on the use of contraception, versus the lived experiences of a range of Catholics in the UK.</p> <p>A marketplace activity. Each table would house a particular worldview (Christianity, Islam, Paganism, Humanism). For each table, there should be words, examples, and images of how that worldview might look across the globe (such as Buddhism in the UK, Tibet, Thailand, and Zen Buddhism in Japan). Students should visit each of the tables, noting down how the worldviews/ expressions may vary depending on geographical location.</p> <p>Students could then produce a short exit ticket on a post-it note with their answer to 'Why is their diversity within belief.' They should be encouraged to include examples from their marketplace activity.</p>	<p>Students could be encouraged to select a particular worldview and research it further. The focus should be on how that worldview might be expressed differently by different people and how geographical location may play a part in it. They could then produce a poster/ research panel to showcase their findings.</p>

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<p>How do worldviews change?</p>	<p>Be able to give contributing factors to the changing landscape of worldviews and beliefs.</p>	<p>Look at the 2011 census data, showing figures on religion and non-religious belief. Students could be asked to make 3 predictions as to how they think it might have changed.</p> <p>If computers/laptops are available, students could use the 'change since 2011' function on the interactive census map to check their predictions. Hovering over areas will cause the data to be displayed. https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/change/identity/religion/religion-tb/no-religion?lad=E08000035 If this is not possible, the teacher could provide adapted printouts of the data.</p> <p>Students explain why they think these changes took place (especially the drop in Christianity and the increase in those identifying as non-religious or of other smaller spiritualities). A screenshot/clipping of a news article headline showing this could be used https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-63792408 and the text examined as a group.</p> <p>A diamond 9 activity considers additional contributing factors. Students should be encouraged to rank these with their highest level of change being the top diamond. After the task, they should explain to the class why they ordered their diamond in the way they did.</p> <p>Students could build on their interpretive skillset by making predictions as to the worldview landscape of Britain in the future.</p>	<p>Students could be encouraged to research their local area and see what changes have happened since the last census (using the link on the left and zooming in). Using the skill from the lesson, they could apply a sociological lens to explain why they think these changes have taken place.</p> <p>Students could be tasked with creating a one-page research slide on one of the rising 'smaller worldviews.'</p>

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Key Questions	Learning Objectives Students should:	Teaching and Learning Opportunities	Wider Learning Opportunities / Points to Note
<p>Why do some worldviews change less?</p>	<p>Understand that some worldviews are more resistant to change.</p> <p>Understand that some worldviews have laws, commands, and rules for which there are limited interpretations.</p>	<p>Look at an optical illusion image (ambiguous figure illusions) such as the duck/rabbit or frog horse https://www.artofplay.com/blogs/stories/fun-with-ambiguous-images. Students could be asked what they see. Following this, teacher should tease out that sometimes, a religious authority might insist on one interpretation- these may be called apodictic laws (established beyond dispute).</p> <p>Students could watch Fr. Mike Schmitz explaining how some Old Testament Laws are no longer required, but that some are established for all time. The Teacher could discuss and tease out that the fact that some laws are apodictic, means that an institutional worldview may be less susceptible to change. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDQQ0U8FHAE</p> <p>Provide a timeline and some A4 pieces of paper with changes to particular teachings (for example women in the priesthood in different denominations). Students could work in groups to order these along the timeline. Students should be able to articulate how some denominations may develop their teachings, while others may remain more static (e.g. C of E and Roman Catholic). When feeding back, the teacher could show explanations of different sources of authority. Where a group considered that the command was divine (dogma), it would be less likely to change.</p> <p>Students consider a worldview with less of a /no central authority. This could be a clip such as <i>Who are the Stonehenge Druids?</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2YuPMbfvdU In this short clip, Arthur says ‘a druid believes in many things’ and later he refers to the fact you can know many things about Druidry, but then points to his heart and says it comes from there. Students could discuss how this could lead to a reduced resistance to change of belief. Other examples could be used.</p>	<p>The teacher could invite a faith representative or speaker to discuss how their worldview may or may not change. This could be organised as a Zoom online faith panel. Alternatively, should the local areas allow, this could be done as a faith walk including visits to different places of worship/ meeting focussing on a study of openness to change.</p>

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<p>What differences are there in non-religious worldviews?</p>	<p>Understand that there is a diverse fabric of non-religious beliefs in the UK.</p> <p>Understand that non-religious experiences look different across the globe.</p>	<p>Match up terms and definitions linking to non-religious worldviews (atheist, agnostic, antitheist, humanist, spiritual atheist).</p> <p>Consider why a person might opt for a non-religious worldview (this would be a good opportunity to link back to the increase of non-religious worldviews in the census)</p> <p>Students could then watch/ read some examples of personal stories about why some people choose non-religious worldviews. A good example would be Richard Dawkins explaining the importance of evolution in forming his view https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3BdFRjqKeg Students could then summarise or create a list of reasons why people are not religious. This should include the perceived benefits of non-religious belief.</p> <p>Build on individual stories by looking at religiosity by country. Students could read a copy of Gallup International https://www.gallup-international.bg/en/36009/religion-prevails-in-the-world/ and consider which countries are the least religious and how this compares with the UK. They could then zoom into a particular country and evaluate the factors contributing to a lack of religious belief. Pew research could be a good foundation for this, with this specific research item focussing on China and how its political beliefs may have had an impact. https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2023/08/30/non-religion/</p> <p>Students could round up by playing ‘gift of the gab.’ They could be challenged to speak for 20 seconds explaining what they know about non-religious worldviews without hesitating or repeating content.</p>	<p>The teacher could book a Humanist speaker via Humanists UK. The focus could be on diversity within non-religious worldviews.</p>

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<p>How do worldviews impact our reality?</p>	<p>Understand that worldviews impact on the way we live our lives.</p> <p>Understand there are advantages and disadvantages to the lenses we use.</p> <p>Understand that there are different thoughts as to what it means to live a good life.</p>	<p>Contemplate the phrase ‘the world would be better off without religious worldviews.’ The teacher could then facilitate discussion about this, teasing out different thoughts about what it means to live a good life.</p> <p>The teacher could then present a slide with different religious/ non-religious quotations. The class could interpret these and explain how that would lead to an enriching of human life. Humanists UK has a quotation page that would be useful as part of this. https://humanists.uk/humanism/humanism-today/humanists-thinking/quotations/</p> <p>The discussion could be further supported by <i>Religion as an Antidepressant</i> by the Big Think. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oldj11NEsc0</p> <p>Place up posters of the benefits of religious worldviews and non-religious worldviews (this could range from mental benefits to physical contributions from religions). Students could create a table and log these in the respective columns. As a challenge, they could then rank them using a numbering system in the table.</p> <p>To extend the activity, the teacher could then add further information to tables about the less positive impact of a range of worldviews (considering that religion is not inherently good).</p> <p>To sum up, the teacher could have a washing line activity. Students would be given the phrase ‘religious worldviews have a positive impact on humanity.’ They would then write their response and peg it along the line, with one side being ‘strongly agree’, one side being ‘strongly disagree’ and the rest being part of the spectrum. Students could then be selected to explain why they selected their position on the line.</p>	<p>Students could reflect on atheistic philosophies such as Nietzsche, considering how a nihilistic belief could impact on living a good life. Other thinkers could be selected.</p>